# Apple prepares AI platform for the Chinese market with local partnerships



Apple is set to introduce a version of its artificial intelligence (AI) platform tailored for the Chinese market, expected to be released in collaboration with significant local technology firms like Alibaba and Baidu around May this year. This adaptation aims to ensure compliance with China's stringent censorship regulations.

According to a report by Bloomberg News, Apple has been focusing on modifying its Apple Intelligence platform to cater to the specific requirements of Chinese authorities, highlighting the necessity of local partnerships to filter the outputs generated by its AI models. The planned collaboration with Alibaba and Baidu is crucial in achieving this, as it provides the necessary tools to navigate the complex landscape of Chinese censorship.

Following the announcement of this partnership, Apple's shares experienced a notable increase of approximately 2 per cent, reflecting investor optimism surrounding the company's efforts to maintain its foothold in the crucial Chinese market. Currently, China stands as Apple’s second largest market, following the United States, yet the tech giant has reported a decline in iPhone sales within the country. In 2024, sales dropped to 43 million units, down from around 52 million the previous year. Analysts suggest that heightened competition from domestic smartphone manufacturers and Apple’s lag in adopting advanced AI technology may be contributing factors to these declining sales figures.

In addition, China has developed its own AI technologies, with the creation of the DeepSeek model, which has emerged as a significant competitor to platforms like OpenAI’s ChatGPT. The responses generated by DeepSeek have shown alignment with narratives put forth by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), reflecting the regulatory environment within which tech companies must operate.

Apple's existing Apple Intelligence platform offers three distinct types of AI services in the United States, encompassing functionalities that run locally on devices, those powered by the company's own internet servers, and tools from OpenAI integrated into Apple's infrastructure. However, to function effectively in the Chinese market, an additional layer of Alibaba's offerings will likely be implemented to filter any content deemed inappropriate by the Chinese government.

Compliance with local laws is not a new concept for Apple. The company recently faced consequences for its adherence to regulations in China, leading to the removal of several applications such as Meta’s Threads, and messaging services like WhatsApp, Telegram, and Signal from its App Store. Apple has publicly stated, “We are obligated to follow the laws in the countries where we operate, even when we disagree,” indicating its commitment to navigating the regulatory landscape in which it operates.

Meanwhile, in the realm of AI, Google has made headlines with the launch of its latest voice model, Gemini 2.5 Pro, which is now available for free users during its experimental phase. The announcement comes as Google's response to the competitive landscape dominated by platforms like ChatGPT, which has gained viral attention for its capabilities, including native image generation.

Gemini 2.5 Pro is designed as a reasoning model, similar to other leading models such as OpenAI's o3 Mini or China’s DeepSeek R1. The new model is tailored to enhance reasoning abilities, especially in coding, mathematics, and science-related tasks. Google asserts that Gemini 2.5 Pro boasts a vast context window of 1 million tokens, allowing it to process extensive amounts of text in one go, which is significantly more than its competitors like Claude’s Sonnet model or OpenAI's o3 Mini.

The tech industry's focus on reasoning models marks a significant shift from traditional pre-trained models. As companies like Google, Microsoft, and Meta continue to develop their AI offerings, the competitive landscape has intensified. These developments coincide with the emergence of Chinese AI models, which are challenging the previously held belief that US-based firms held a substantial advantage in the AI space.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://community.allthings.how/t/apple-intelligence-for-iphone-users-in-china-to-face-heavy-censorship/1532> - Corroborates Apple's partnership with Alibaba and Baidu to adapt its AI platform for the Chinese market, specifically to comply with censorship regulations.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/tech/apple-china-ai-alibaba-baidu-collaboration-b2699039.html> - Supports the claim that Apple is collaborating with Alibaba and Baidu to introduce a censored version of its AI features in China, expected around May.
* <https://appleinsider.com/articles/25/02/14/alibaba-to-manipulate-apple-intelligence-output-in-china-for-censorship> - Details how Alibaba's layer will manipulate Apple Intelligence outputs to ensure compliance with Chinese censorship, aligning with the country's regulatory requirements.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - Although not directly available, the source is mentioned in the original text as a reference for Apple's plans and partnerships in the AI sector.
* <https://www.bloomberg.com> - Cited as the source indicating Apple's efforts to modify its AI platform for the Chinese market, emphasizing the need for local partnerships like Alibaba and Baidu.
* <https://www.macworld.com/article/631115/apple-sales-china-decline.html> - Highlights Apple's declining sales in China and the importance of adopting AI technology to remain competitive, which is not directly available but aligns with the trend described.